Guidelines for Charging Faculty Summer Salary
Updated May 2018

The following guidance is provided for faculty who, in addition to their nine-month academic year base salary, choose to devote additional effort and receive compensation during the summer months of June, July and August. The principles are as follows:

• Charges for work performed by faculty during the summer months will be determined for each faculty member at their Institutional Base Salary (full time 9 month academic year) rate divided by the period to which the base salary applies. The monthly summer pay rate is based on the new IBS salary rate that goes into effect for the fiscal year that begins on July 1st of that summer. (This does not apply to activities for which faculty are permitted to receive “supplemental compensation”, for example, teaching an executive education course offered by Sloan Executive Education or the School of Engineering’s Professional Education program.)

• Faculty may charge salary for up to three full summer months. MIT does not provide compensation for faculty when they are on vacation. Therefore, faculty members who take vacation may not be paid for 100% effort during that month.

• Faculty may fund effort expended over the summer by charging salary to sponsored research and other sponsored projects, discretionary funds or, if approved, to other Institute funds.

• All effort and corresponding salary charged to any sponsored project(s) must be in compliance with sponsor and Institute policies. Further, the effort committed during the period should be devoted exclusively to the activities supported by that project or projects, with the salary charges to each aligning on a monthly basis with the effort provided.

• It is understood that, as part of their normal work, faculty may participate in “other academic, administrative or research activities” (OARA) during the summer. These activities include but are not limited to: advising students (outside the scope of the sponsored research charged), unsponsored research, administrative committees, preparing new or renewal proposals, teaching, curriculum development, peer reviews, refereeing and/or writing other scholarly publications. Effort associated with OARA during the summer months:
  • may be charged to MIT unrestricted funds (operating or discretionary) and may under certain circumstances be charged to gifts or other sponsored programs if permitted by the terms of the award or gift and
  • may never be charged to any federally sponsored research project.

Effective June 1, 2014, faculty who choose to devote effort and receive compensation during the three summer months will not normally be allowed to charge more than 90% of their effort in any one month (or more than 2.7 total months over the summer) to a federal award (or a combination of federal awards). Each School has a process for reviewing compliance and addressing exceptions and cases where this policy would create a hardship.

The NSF’s general policy limits proposed support for senior personnel to no more than 2 months aggregate among any combination of NSF grants. However, if required to achieve the project objectives without a change in scope, normal re-budgeting authority does allow salary charges in excess of 2 months without NSF prior approval.
For more information see:


If the sponsor has a salary cap (e.g. NIH), charges to the grant will be reduced to the capped amount. Amounts over the cap may be charged to the principal investigator's discretionary funds. For the current cap, see


Federal awards under "expanded authorities" (e.g. from NSF, NIH, DOE, etc.) require written approval from a sponsor when decreasing effort by 25% or more. This includes not only effort committed during the academic year but also compensated summer effort as well. Requests to the sponsor need to be initiated by the principal investigator and co-signed by the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP).

Faculty should consult the terms and conditions of their awards prior to committing summer month effort as sponsors may have restrictions on summer salary. Any questions regarding sponsor terms or conditions should be addressed to your OSP representative or Michelle Christy at mchristy@mit.edu.